diffracted wavefront distortion, as measured by He-Ne laser light, within a laser light irradiation area of said reflection type diffraction grating in Littrow mounting is not more than $\lambda/10$, wherein λ is a wavelength of the He-Ne laser light.

2. (Amended) An excimer laser apparatus in which a laser chamber containing therein main discharge electrodes for excitation is interposed between an output mirror and a bandwidth-narrowing optical system, wherein:

A' cont'd

said bandwidth-narrowing optical system comprises a Littrow mounting reflection type diffraction grating, a beam diameter-enlarging optical system positioned on an entrance side of said reflection type diffraction grating, and a slit located on an entrance side of said beam diameter-enlarging optical system, and

light-blocking means is positioned between said reflection type diffraction grating and said slit to prevent laser light from being applied to a portion of a laser irradiation area of said reflection type diffraction grating, at which diffracted wavefront distortion, as measured by He-Ne laser light, within a laser light irradiation area of said reflection type diffraction grating in Littrow mounting is not more than $\lambda/10$, where λ is a measuring wavelength.

5. (Amended) A narrow-band excimer laser apparatus according to claim 1 or 2, wherein a blaze angle of said reflection type diffraction grating is not less than 76°.

A2

Please add new claim 5 as follows: